

School-based public health strategies for our children



October 15 2003

Yakima, WA

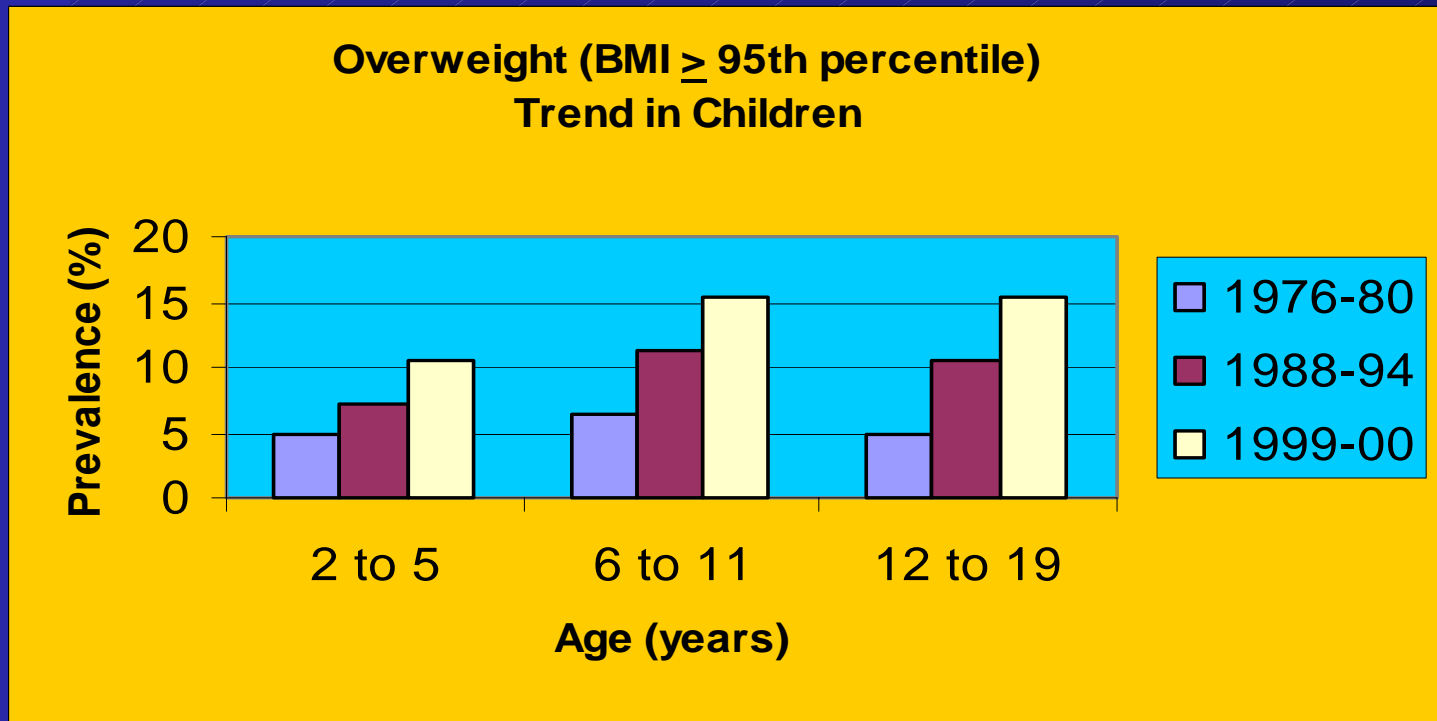
Presentation purpose

- To provide an overview of school-based public health strategies to members of the SBOH, the YHDBOH, representatives of local school boards, & other interested community members so that they will have the tools & resources they need to work together to make it easy for children to choose health-promoting foods, to be physically active, & to be ready to learn at school.

Why work with children?

Why Children?

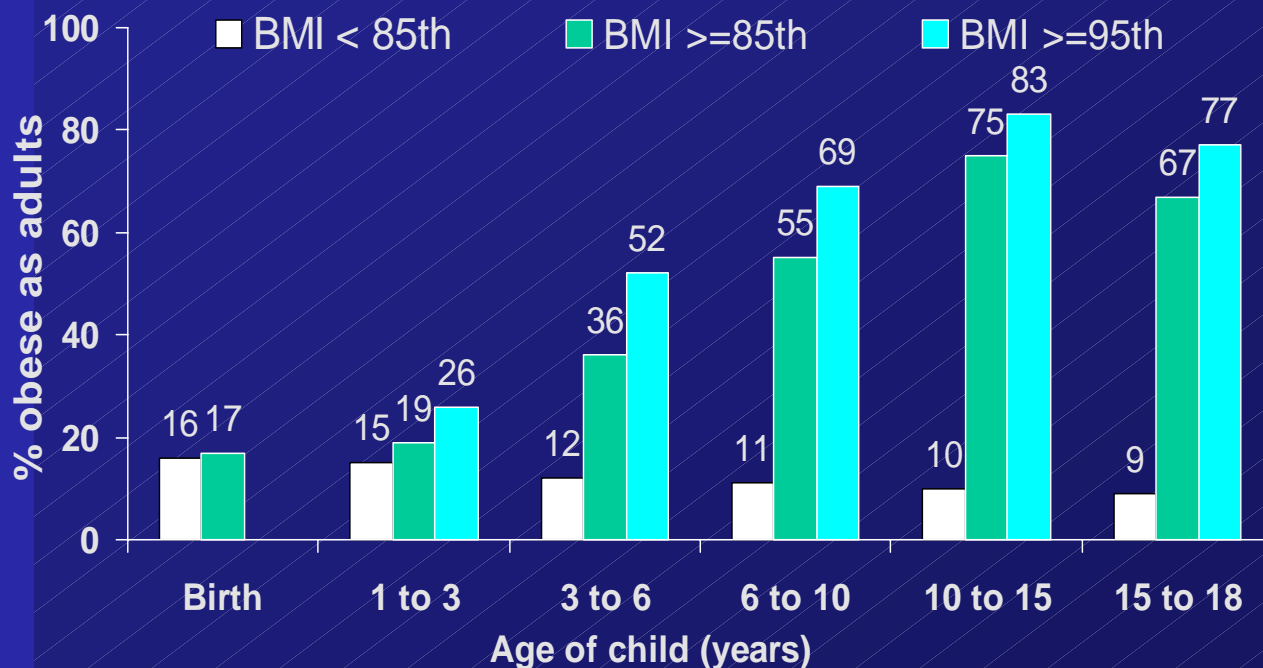
Childhood obesity



Ogden et al. JAMA 2002; 288:1728-32

Why Children?

Tracking BMI-for-Age from Birth to 18 Years with Percent of Overweight Children Who Are Obese at Age 25¹

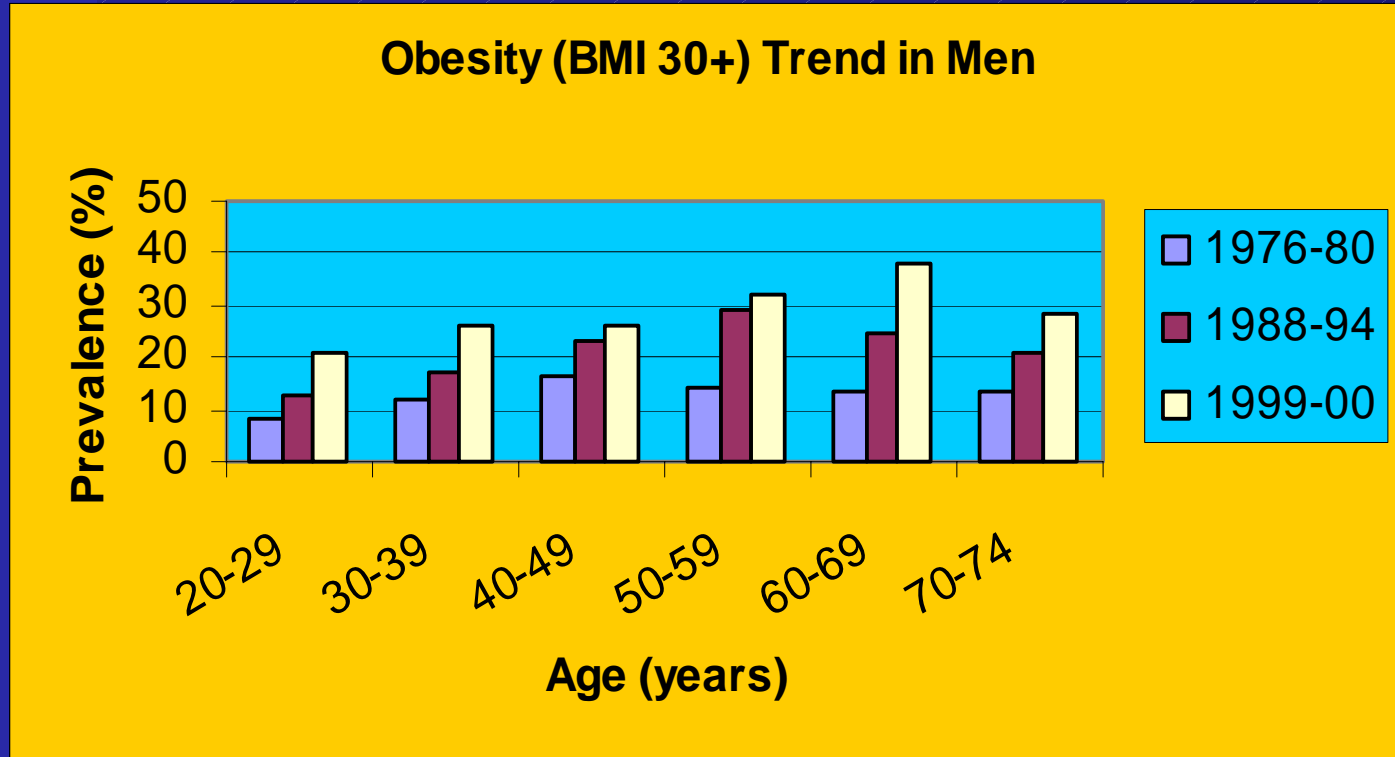


Whitaker et al. NEJM 1997;337:869-873

Why Children?



Adult men



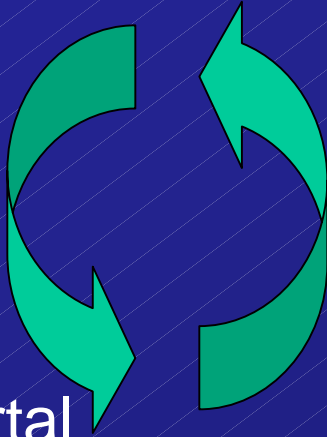
Flegal 2003, personal communication

Why Children?

Lifecycle Influences & Risk of Obesity & Chronic Disease

Growth

Fetal
Infant
Child
Pubertal



Reproduction

Maternal weight gain
Maternal body composition
Maternal ability to nourish the fetus
Lactation

Aging

Loss of lean body mass
Increase in abdominal/visceral adiposity

Why Children?

Why schools?



Why Schools?

Nutrition and health impact academic performance.

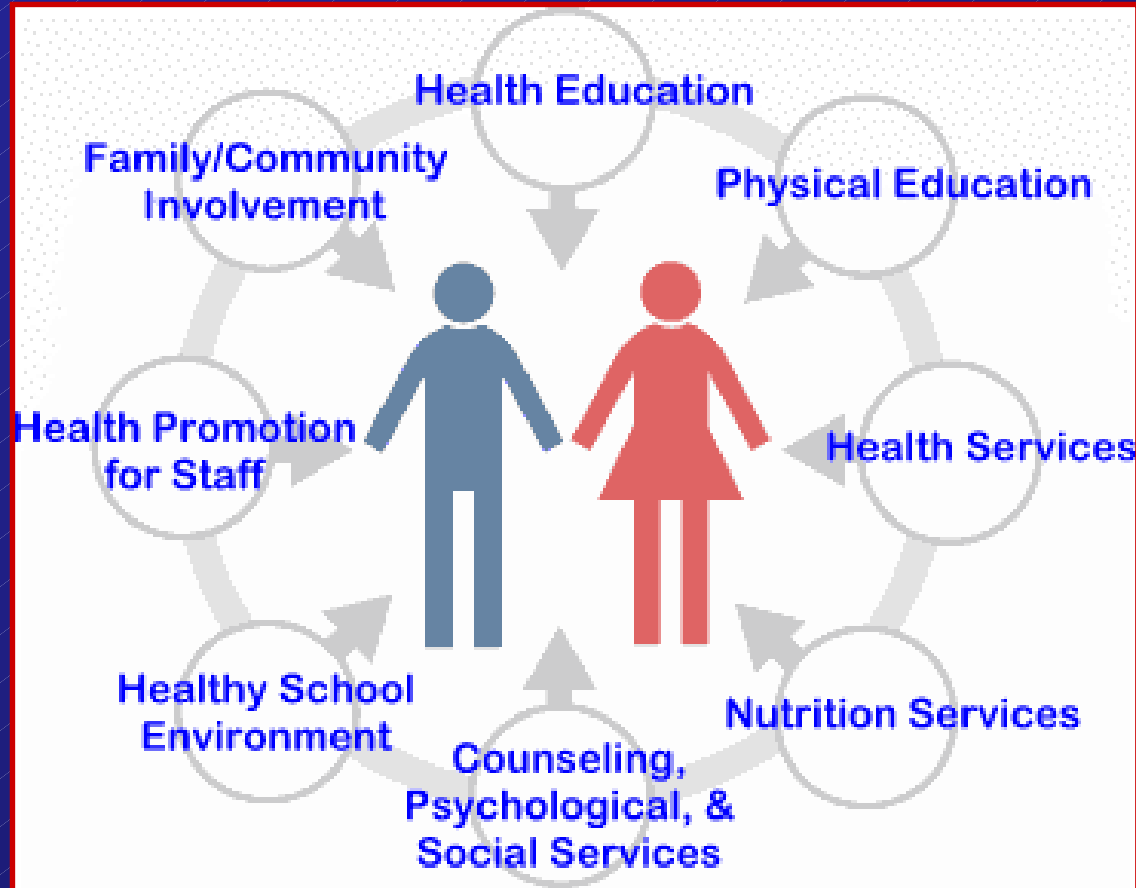
- “Undernutrition impacts the behavior of children, their school performance, and their overall cognitive development.”
- School breakfast increases attendance, grades, behavior, and emotional adjustment in low income children.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/makethegrade2.pdf>

Children bring to school . .

- Bodies
- Hearts
- Brains
- Experiences from home & community

Coordinated school health programs



Why Nutrition and PA?

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/about/healthyyouth.htm>

Why should we care about schools & physical activity?

- Young children need physical activity for optimal development
- Children & school staff need physical activity for mental health & wellness



What about nutrition & schools?



Why Nutrition and PA?

Courtesy: Lance Wells, Food Service
Director, Othello School District

What do we hear from high school kids?

- “I just don’t eat until I get home from school.”
- “Only the free lunch kids are in the cafeteria.”
- “I go across the street to QFC. I can get a bag of chips & a can of coke for less.”
- “By the time I get my food, it’s time to go back to class.”
- “It’s just too loud & crowded in there.”

What can children learn during lunch?

- Nutritious food is attractive, tasty & socially acceptable.
- Food is a pleasure to be savored & enjoyed.
- Eating together builds social cohesion.
- Adults value children.
- Adults value healthy foods.

What does this have to do with academic performance?

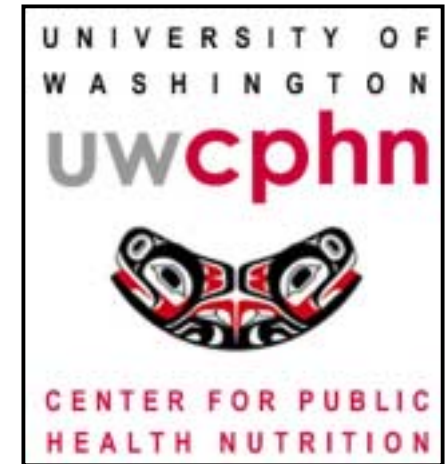
- Attendance & graduation rates might increase if children feel welcome & valued at school.
- Children can attend to the job of learning when they have eaten modest amounts of healthy foods slowly & with pleasure for breakfast & lunch.
- Team-based learning can be enhanced.

So where do we start?

- Build on previous work
- Existing tools
 - Assessment
 - Research
 - Best practices
 - Case studies

Healthy Schools in Washington

<http://www.healthyschoolswa.org>



Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction



wssda.org

Washington State
School Directors' Association

Healthy Schools in Washington

<http://www.healthyschoolswa.org>

- To provide resources to parents, teachers & principals, students, schools districts, & communities in Washington State so that they will be able to work together to make it easy for children to choose health-promoting foods, to be physically active, and to be ready to learn at school

Healthy Schools in Washington

<http://www.healthyschoolswa.org>

- Tools for assessment & action
 - Parents
 - Teachers & school administrators
 - Students
 - School districts
 - Communities

Healthy Schools in Washington

<http://www.healthyschoolswa.org>

- Examples of projects to improve school environments
- CDC assessment of states' school health policies
- Policies and programs in Washington State
- Nutrition and physical activity guidelines
- Health data
- Reports and articles
- Sample legislation and policies
- Organizations



School Health Index

Self-assessment & planning tool that will enable schools to:

- Involve teachers, parents, students, & the community in improving school services
- Identify the strengths & needs of their physical activity & nutrition policies & programs
- Develop an action plan



Module 4: Nutrition services scorecard

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS (N=13)

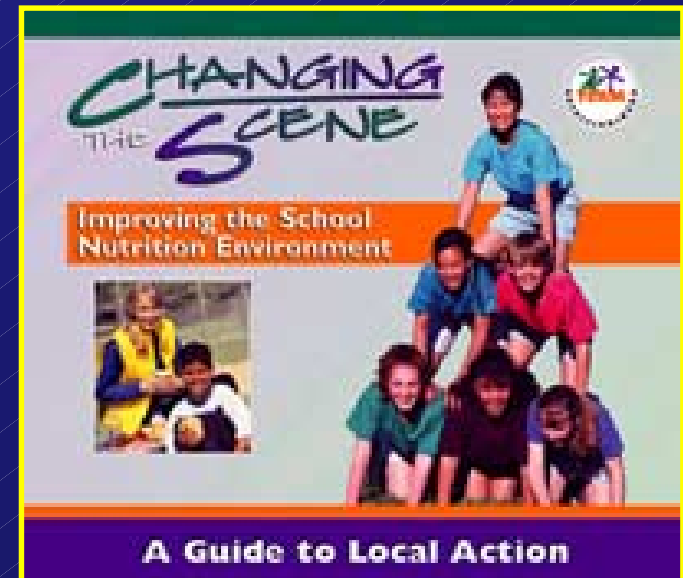
- Variety of foods in school meals?
- Meals include appealing, low-fat items?
- A la carte offerings include appealing low-fat items?
- Promote healthy cafeteria selections?
- Clean, safe, pleasant cafeteria?
- Scaled responses based on definitions & criteria established for each question
 - 3 = Fully in place
 - 2 = Partially in place
 - 1 = Under development
 - 0 = Not in place
- Module score based on total possible score (e.g. 39)
- Score used for planning

Changing the Scene:

Improving the School Nutrition Environment



- Tools for use at the local level to raise awareness & address school environment issues that influence students' eating & physical activity practices



Changing the Scene:

Improving the School Nutrition Environment



- Six components including:
 - Commitment to nutrition & PA
 - Quality school meals
 - Other healthy food options
 - Pleasant eating experiences
 - Nutrition education
 - Marketing
- Identification of stakeholders
- Tools & resources
 - Definitions of success
 - “What you can do . . .” for stakeholders
 - Fact sheets
 - Activities

Planning for Change

The following steps
environment in you

1 Create a Team ar

Important change gene
one person sees a need for c
take action. A good first step
group of interested people ar
you share. You may be able i
team such as a school health
team members include the sc
or manager, teachers, school
administrators, parents, stud
members and leaders. The te
people who are willing to ma
ticipate actively and stay inv

2 Conduct a Needs

The next step is for the
the school environment that
can use the Improvement Ch
Materials booklet.)

3 Develop an Actio

Review the school's str
and select areas for improve
to decide which areas to tack
later. Decide on specific acti
the desired improvements. D
and resources you will need
and what your timeframes wi
ing successes and resolving
tain your plan includes a mel
progress.

Planning for Change

COMPONENT Quality School

Healthy school meals provi
ents children need for sou
Studies confirm what pare
said for years—children who are
have difficulty learning. The vari
offered in school meal programs
learn to enjoy many different foc
healthy eating patterns.

Definitions of Su

- Schools offer lunch, breakfast
snack programs, and students
participate.
- The Child Nutrition Programs
school foodservice staff that is
according to current professio
- All school foodservice staff ha
preservice training and regula
professional development acti
- School meals are offered at pi
afford.
- Menus are planned with input
include local, cultural, and et
students.
- Menus meet nutrition standar
U.S. Department of Agricultur
menu planning principles, and
healthy choices that are tasty,
quality, and are served at the

Components of a Healthy School Nut

COMPONENT 2 CONTINUED Quality School Meals

What Can Your Team

ACTIVITY 1

Work to sta
one—or en

How to's:

- Contact t
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- If bus scl
school fo
of the scl
- Urge adn
afterscho
- Get supp
such as f
- Encourag
for schoo

ACTIVITY 2

Educate ad

How to's:

- Ask to sp
Explain v
educator
- Gather in
Service's
- Ask your
- Write arti
items ab
- Put infor
- Post eye-
and on sc

ACTIVITY 3

If school meals need improvement, encourage school foodservice staff to develop new menu choices, offer a variety of healthy options, and more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

How to's:

- Work with the school principal and school foodservice director and manager to develop an advisory committee for improving menus and food preparation techniques. The committee could include food and nutrition experts from the community such as registered dietitians and chefs, and nutritionists from the Cooperative Extension Service and universities with dietetics programs.
- Propose establishing a student Nutrition Advisory Council to get students involved in nutrition and physical activity and to provide input on school meals (see references to California Project LEAN, American Cancer Society, or the American School Food Service Association in the Resource section.)

ACTIVITY 4

Promote ongoing training or certification for school foodservice staff to enhance their skills in planning, preparing, and serving nutritious and appealing meals. Encourage schools to seek continuing education credit for the training.

How to's:

- Explain the importance of providing training and continuing education. Work with the school foodservice director to identify training needs—including financial management training.
- Look into the American School Food Service Association's requirements for certification and credentialing. Discuss this with the school foodservice director and school administrators.
- Contact your State office of child nutrition, the American School Food Service Association, the National Food Service Management Institute, or your State school foodservice association to see what training is available. (see Resource section.)



ATTN: School Foodservice Staff

- You want the best for your students. Show it by creating opportunities for them to make healthy food choices.
- Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, lifelong health and well-being. Well-planned school nutrition programs positively influence students' eating habits.
- Studies of the School Breakfast Program demonstrated positive effects on school attendance and a reduction in school tardiness, and have shown that children who

eat nutritious morning meals perform better

ATTN: School Principal

- Schools are not responsible for meeting every need of their students; but where the need directly affects learning, schools must meet the challenge.
- Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Well-planned school nutrition programs positively influence students' eating habits.
- Regular physical activity reduces feelings of depression and anxiety and promotes psychological well-being and long-term health benefits.
- A good breakfast on their ability "test days": important knowledge learning.
- Studies of the have demonstrated attendance tardiness, a eat nutritious academical are physical skip breakfast

ATTN: School Superintendent and School Board Members

- Schools are not responsible for meeting every need of their students; but where the need directly affects learning, schools must meet the challenge.
- Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Well-planned school nutrition programs positively influence students' eating habits.
- Regular physical activity reduces feelings of depression and anxiety and promotes psychological well-being and long-term health benefits.
- A good breakfast gives children a jump-start on their ability to learn. Serving breakfast on "test days" is a good move. But learning is important every day—it builds on previous knowledge and is the foundation for future learning.
- Studies of the School Breakfast Program have demonstrated positive effects on school attendance and a reduction in school tardiness, and have shown that children who eat nutritious morning meals perform better academically, show improved behavior, and are physically healthier than children who skip breakfast.

You Can Support a Healthy School Nutrition Environment

- Provide meals that are tasty, healthy, and appropriate to students, meet USDA's nutrition standards, reflect the cultural backgrounds and preferences of students.
- Offer only healthy choices from the five major groups of the Food Guide Pyramid.
- Coordinate activities with classroom and physical education teachers and other staff.
- Support classroom lessons by offering foods that illustrate key messages, decorate the dining room with educational posters, post the nutrition information of the foods you serve, and conduct promotional events in the dining room that support healthy choices.
- Involve students and families in planning and evaluating school meals.
- Look for continuing education opportunities to learn more about nutrition, preparing healthier meals, food safety, and marketing healthy choices.
- Invite and welcome parents and grandparents for lunch or breakfast occasionally.
- Market complete meals to students and provide enough choices within the school meal program to meet nutrition standards and student preferences.

You Can Support a Healthy School Nutrition Environment Here's How:

- Let staff and the community know that you value and enthusiastically support a healthy school nutrition environment. Let your actions reflect your values.
- Enforce district policies and establish and enforce school policies to support a healthy school nutrition environment.
- Establish and enforce policies requiring that all foods and beverages available at school contribute to meeting the dietary needs of students; that is, they are from the five major food groups of the Food Guide Pyramid.
- Start a School Breakfast Program if your school doesn't have one.
- Encourage school staff to recognize that they are role models for students.
- Seek sources of needed revenue for your school so there is no need for raising funds through vending machines, school stores, snack bars, or other food outlets.
- Emphasize that nutrition and physical activity are part of the total educational program and encourage staff to work together toward children's health.
- Provide adequate time to reflect a valuable schedule lunch the school day students have
- Eat lunch in the school with the students to eat with students
- Schedule recess for schools.
- Make physical activity a part of the school day.
- Regularly include nutrition presentations.
- Don't use food for rewards.
- Work to build a healthy school environment like the shared funding in other areas of education.

You Can Support a Healthy School Nutrition Environment Here's How:

- Let staff and the community know that you value and enthusiastically support a healthy school nutrition environment. Let your actions reflect your values.
- Provide guidance and direction for school staff, and require them to be accountable for actively supporting a healthy school nutrition environment.
- Make the necessary funds available to establish and support all six components of a healthy school nutrition environment.
- Establish and enforce policies requiring that all foods and beverages available at school contribute to meeting the dietary needs of students; that is, they are from the five major food groups of the Food Guide Pyramid.
- Seek other sources of revenue for schools so there is no need to raise funds through vending machines, school stores, snack bars, and other school food outlets that compete with nutritious school meals.
- Require that schools allow time in the curriculum for nutrition education and physical education.
- Establish appropriate qualifications for school foodservice staff and support ongoing professional development.
- Establish professional development for teachers in the areas of nutrition and nutrition education.
- Establish policy that requires a lunch and breakfast program in every school.
- Eat lunch in school dining rooms periodically and spend time with the students and staff.
- Promote positive local media coverage of schools.
- If vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and other food outlets are allowed on school property, establish policy for the district that appropriately limits access.
- Work to build support for shared local/State/Federal funding for the school meal programs—like the shared funding in other areas of education.

Case Study: Minneapolis North-Changes

Options

- Increased the number of machines from 4 to 16
- Stocked 13 machines with water or 100% fruit/vegetable juice
- Stocked two machines with sports drinks
- Limited soda pop vending to one machine, with limited hours of sale

Price

- Water is \$.75
- Sports drinks and 100% fruit/vegetable juices are \$1.00
- Soda and fruit drinks (e.g., Fruitopia) are \$1.25

Access

- Water machines were strategically placed in high traffic areas - easily accessed by students and staff
- A policy change now allows students to drink only water in the classroom; prior to this no beverages were allowed

Case Study: Minneapolis North – Impact

- Parents applauded announcement
- Number of beverages sold more than doubled
- Water is best selling beverage
- Profits increased \$4,000



www.healthyschoolswa.org

Seattle schools

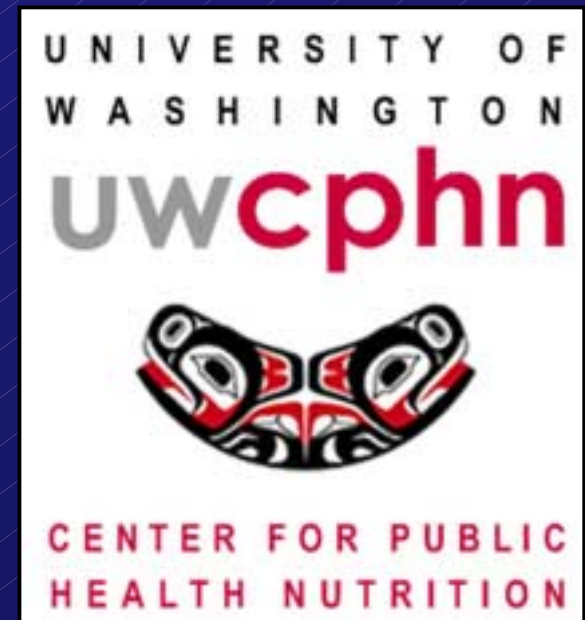
- NIH-funded *Impact of a Non-commercialism Policy in Seattle Schools*
- 3-year pilot project in 2 south Seattle HS
- Steps:
 - Convene Task Force
 - Assess school environment using SHI
 - Implement changes
 - Monitor & evaluate changes with process & obesity-related outcomes



Grants for Healthy Youth

Purpose: To build upon & advance knowledge of primary prevention approaches to overweight & obesity in children & adolescents in our communities

Center for Public Health Nutrition



Children's Alliance

- CPHN-funded *Preventing Childhood Obesity through Public Awareness & Advocacy*
- 18-month pilot project in 4 school districts throughout WA
 - Confirmed: Ellensburg, Snohomish
 - Interested: Olympia, Thorp, Central Kitsap & Puyallup
- Steps:
 - Convene school-based advisory group
 - Assess school nutrition environment using SHI
 - Identify 1 policy change
 - Implement change(s)
 - Monitor & evaluate change(s)

Together, we can
change the school
nutrition &
physical activity
environment &



make a
difference!